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the size of coal-humpers' bunks. The members of the Coal-humpers' Union, desire that the provisions of the Coal-humpers' Bill act should be enforced, and it was asked that an inspector should be appointed to see that the terms of the Act are complied with. Most of the stevedores use a basket of the proper size, but it is a fact that others work with bags, and are free labourers.

Mr. Perry pointed out that the Act is defective inasmuch as power is given under it to appoint an inspector, but he promised to communicate with the Attorney-General and with the Inspector-General of Police, with the view of finding out whether the Water Police could take the necessary action in the matter.

Endified Morlark Train.—The popularity of the tramway, which was opened last Saturday by the Minister for Works, was shown by the first three days' results. On those days 7026 passengers were carried from and to Burwood, and the cash receipts were £4110 10d. These figures were exclusive of season and workmen's ticket-holders. Morlark and Concord, which a year ago had many empty houses, have now become popular, and new houses have been erected in all the districts served by the tramway.

Island News.—The steamer *Mambarie*, one of Messrs. Burnell, Philip, and Co.'s Shepherd Flaid fleet of island vessels, arrived last evening in Neutral Bay. Captain Todd, in command of the vessel, stated that it had been reported by H.M.S. Wallace that Mr. Brewster, who was trading in the Bank Islands, died in August last. The Wallaces came to Australia in 1881, and the family, which included Mr. Brewster's death, the deceased gentleman belonged to Sydney, and the news of his death came as a great shock to his friends here. An attempt was made by Captain Todd to communicate with Mr. Brewster's station, but in consequence of the heavy seas he was compelled to keep the steamer on her course.

The weather was very prevalent in the islands, and quite a number of deaths had occurred. Fighting on Tanna was still going on between the bush and coast natives, so that it was impossible to do any trading at that place.

The P. and O. Steam Navigation Company.—The superintendent of the P. and O. Company's passenger steamers, who arrived from the company's representative at Durban, stated that the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, before leaving Natal, made an inspection of the South African coast, and examined the ports of all liability, as the safest method of appointment, and the Federal States, having agreed, it must now abide by it.

To THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.—Sir,—The Government having to-day, by 14 votes to 9, carried in the House of Commons a bill to appropriate £100,000 for the payment of debts of the Commonwealth, and thereafter until the Parliament otherwise provides, of the net revenue of the Commonwealth from dues of customs and of excise not more than one-fourth shall be applied annually to the payment of debts of compensation.

The fourth section provides for the assumption by the Commonwealth of the current obligations of the State in respect to a transferred department.

As governing, to a great extent, the financial operations of the Commonwealth, clause 87 must be closely kept in view. It appears to me that the bill is in order.

Mr. J. A. NELD, Senator. I am, &c., J. A. NELD, Senator. The Senate, Melbourne, September 19.

THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE STATES.

PAYMENTS FOR TRANSFERRED PROPERTY.

PROPERTY ACQUISITION BILL.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL REPORTER.)

After a great deal of debate, amendment, and re-drafting the Property Acquisition Bill has passed through all its stages in the Senate. An effort was made on Thursday to have the measure recommended to that an important clause might be struck out. The attempt was unsuccessful. So also was the "forward attack" on the third section. A motion to strike out the section, or to amend it, was carried, but the majority of the members of the Senate voted against it. The bill will be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance.

Only three sections will be received, and they are, therefore, more nearly affected by the operation of clause 45.

The exact position of the States is, however, best set out in the form of another table. The shares of the States of the liability remaining after the deductions are made was shown above in the column of the balance due. They may, under clause 44, be paid in cash, which is not in the least degree probable, or debt to an equivalent amount may be taken over on account valuation at 35 per cent.

The compensation which is to be allowed to them, however, is the amount instead of the larger amount; and clause 45 provides for reduction of the value.

The third section, as it immediately relates to the matter under review, is quoted in full.

"The Commonwealth shall compensate the State for the value of any property passing to the Commonwealth under this section, and for the loss of the right to the mode of compensation, if it shall be determined under laws to be made by the Parliament."

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COMMONWEALTH NOTES.

(BY OUR SPECIAL REPORTER.)

FEDERAL TARIFF.

MELBOURNE, Sunday.

It is stated that the consideration of the tariff by the Cabinet has been completed, and beyond the checking of figures by Sir George Curzon, Mr. Kingston, and the Secretary of the Treasury, the further steps required to be done. Mr. Barton has promised that the banks bill will be introduced before the tariff is introduced. So it would seem the most likely date upon which the Treasurer will bring in the financial proposals of the Government.

ELECTORAL BILL.

There is a desire on all sides of the House of Representatives that the Electoral Bill should be proceeded with as soon as possible. Various possibilities in the way of complications have been pointed out as likely to occur if any prolonged delay takes place in the introduction of the bill.

The evidence given at the inquest on the bodies of the seamen recovered from the sea near New Zealand was that the Cobras were engaged in a sounding the day before.

French Canadians vied with the English in displaying enthusiasm on account of the visit.

SPECIAL CABLES.

FROM THE "HERALD'S" LONDON CORRESPONDENTS.

THE ROYAL TOUR.

ARRIVAL AT OTTAWA.

LONDON, Sept. 21.

The Duke and the Duchess of Cornwall and York arrived at Ottawa yesterday, and were welcomed by the Earl of Minto, the Governor-General, Sir Wilfrid Laurier (and other Ministers of the Dominion).

A third British reverse has occurred.

The Boers are raiding on the Upper Tugela,

in south-western Natal.

Fighting is reported to have taken place at

Action Holmes, 25 miles west of Ladysmith.

There is an impression that General Botha

and Commandant de Wet are co-operating in

the invasion of Natal.

General Botha has dispersed a number of

guns which the Boers buried on their retreat

from Natal last year.

LORDON, Sept. 21.

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French Canadians vied with the English in

displaying enthusiasm on account of the visit.

COMMANDANT OF THE FEDERAL FORCES.

LONDON, Sept. 21.

Major-General Sir H. J. T. Hildyard has

declined the position of Commandant of the forces of the Australian Commonwealth.

Our special reporter in Melbourne wired on Mon-

day last, stating that Major-General Sir H. J. T. Hildyard has accepted the name of the

Commandant of the forces of the Australian Commonwealth.

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VICTORIA.

ATTEMPTED ROBBERY BY A MASKED MAN.

A COURAGEOUS CHINESE.

MELBOURNE, Sunday.
The result of the Darling Downs election, officially declared at Townsville yesterday, was as follows:-
L. E. Groome 4322
J. T. Bell 2087
Informal 45
Majority for L. E. Groome, 1845.

At a meeting of delegates of the various Queensland agricultural societies on Friday it was decided to form a Chamber of Agriculture, and rules were adopted. Hon. A. J. Thynne was appointed president.

A Gladstone message states that satisfactory information has been received regarding the Caloundra Coal Proprietary's property.

THE STORMY WEATHER.

The weather on Saturday was exceedingly unpleasant. A gale of wind blew from the north and north-west throughout the day, shattering the city fence, chimneys, plates, windows, and roofs. The chimney stack at Yarra Falls (Fleurieu) was blown down, representing a loss of £250; and the roof of a house recently occupied by Mr. H. C. White, which was recently destroyed by fire, was also levelled. As night closed in rain began to fall heavily, and the water contained wet and chilly drizzling to the bone. The weather was heavier than usual throughout the State, but the rainfall island was heavier than in the metropolis. The telegraph lines suffered considerably, and communication with many country towns was entirely blocked during the afternoon and evening.

At Egeron, in the Ballarat district, the Wesleyan minister, Mr. W. S. St. John, was driving a large brough from one of the streets when a fallen horse stampeded, smashing the top. The driver, named N. M. McMillan, narrowly escaped being killed.

DEATHS FROM POISONING.

A distressing poisoning case, involving the loss of a distinguished life, occurred in the Warracknabeal district. Two boys, aged 12 and 14 years, respectively, ingested the contents of a bottle of Mr. F. W. Hupfeld, while gathering wild flowers on Friday found a tin containing chloroform of lime, and ate the contents. Both were admitted to hospital, where they developed symptoms of poisoning. Death was summonsed, but the older boy died at 9 o'clock on Friday night, and the younger ones succumbed at 4 o'clock on Saturday morning.

JOLIMONT RAILWAY COLLISION.

Numbers of compensation claims arising out of the fatal collision at Jolimont, Victoria, have been settled, but it is probable that in several cases, where the compensation asked for is considerably exorbitant, the master will have to be settled in the law courts.

Mr. Duncan McNeil, one of the pioneers of the Cranbourne district, died a few days ago at the age of 94. He arrived from Scotland 62 years ago, became a son of a long-lived family. His mother died at the age of over 100 years and his brother is still living, aged 86.

Dr. D. J. Thompson, one of the oldest residents of Cranbourne, died on Wednesday aged 86. He had been a resident of Victoria for 62 years.

Mr. Dixon, widow of an elderly man who died under unusual circumstances at Newstead, in the Cranbourne district, was buried on Saturday. His widow, referred to as a poor widow, had been dismissed. The Chief Justice held that the words complained of were used in connection with the action of Chief Justice, and a warrant has been issued on a charge of misappropriation, is said to have been seen in Fiji on August 26.

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